

Message Text

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ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 EB-08 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
/031 W

-----116859 252014Z /73

R 251928Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2143
INFO AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: BEXP
SUBJECT: TEMPS: CASE NO. EDP 101-INSCI INT'L INC.

REF: STATE 0617 #

EMBASSY CALLED ON INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS FIRMS, TRADE ASSOCIATIONS, GOVERNMENT AGENCIES, US COMPUTER FIRMS, AND COMMERCIAL AGENTS TO OBTAIN INFORMATION FOR SUBJECT TEMPS. WITHOUT DETAILED INFORMATION ON THE SPECIFIC SOFTWARE PROGRAMS INSCI INT'L, INC. HOPES TO MARKET IN FRANCE, EMBASSY COULD NOT OBTAIN PRECISE READING ON MARKET POTENTIAL. FINDINGS INDICATE THAT, IN GENERAL THE PERSONNEL APPLICATION FOR IS NOT COMPUTERIZED, ALTHOUGH LEAVE AND SALARY RECORDS ARE ON COMPUTERS. WE FOUND A MARKED FEELING AMONG RESPONDENTS THAT FURTHER COMPUTERIZATION OF PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION IS HIGHLY LIKELY IN FRANCE PERHAPS NOT IMMEDIATELY BUT WITHIN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

1. QUESTION A: TO WHAT EXTENT HAS PERSONNEL APPLICATION BEEN COMPUTERIZED IN FRANCE?

A. RESPONSES FROM BUSINESS FIRMS: COMAFF CONTACTED PERSONNEL MANAGERS FOLLOWING FIRMS, SELECTED, AS UNCLASSIFIED

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CROSS SECTION FRENCH INDUSTRY, FROM LE NOUVEL ECONOMISTE LISTING OF 5,000 MOST IMPORTANT FRENCH FIRMS:
--FICHET BAUCHE, MANUFACTURER, LOCKS/SAFES,
3,000 EMPLOYEES
--COMPTOIR INTERNATIONAL ET COMMERCIAL, BANKING,
4,000 EMPLOYEES
--LOGABAX, MANUFACTURER OF PRINTING/GRAPHIC ARTS

EQUIPMENT, 1,500 EMPLOYEES

--ELIDA GIBBS (GROUPE UNILEVER), SOAP ETC.,

800 EMPLOYEES

--SOURIAU, ELECTRONICS MANUFACTURER, 2,000

EMPLOYEES

--DUMEZ, PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTORS, 25,000 EMPLOYEES

--GAN, INSURANCE, 12,000 EMPLOYEES.

DUMEZ IS THE ONLY FIRM CONTACTED WHICH HAS A COMPUTERIZED PERSONNEL APPLICATION FORM. ALL ASPECTS OF ITS PERSONNEL SYSTEM ARE COMPUTERIZED. RESPONSES FROM REMAINING FIRMS INDICATE PERSONNEL APPLICATION NOT COMPUTERIZED. JOB APPLICANT FILLS OUT, IN LONG HAND, A PAPER FORM, I.E., A TRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION FORM.

ALL FIRMS CONTACTED HAVE ALREADY PUT SALARY AND LEAVE INFORMATION ON COMPUTERS. IN MOST FIRMS, NO OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYEE OR HIS SKILLS, WORK HISTORY, ETC. ARE COMPUTERIZED. HOWEVER, ONE COMPANY HAS COMPUTERIZED ITS EMPLOYEES WHO ARE MOTHERS IN ORDER DISTRIBUTE GIFTS ON MOTHERS'DAY AND HAS AGES OF EMPLOYEES CHILDREN ON COMPUTER IN ORDER TO GIVE CHRISTMAS GIFTS TO THOSE UNDER THREE YEARS.

IN GENERAL, PERSONNEL RECORD KEEPING APPEARS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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BE RATHER "OLD-FASHIONED" IN THE FIRMS CONTACTED. ONE RESPONDENT FROM MATRA, A LARGE (4,600 EMPLOYEES) AND IMPORTANT FRENCH FIRM WHICH HAS A SEPARATE COMPUTER DIVISION, TOLD US PERSONNEL FILES ARE STILL MAINTAINED CLERICALLY BY HAND ON OUT-SIZED FILE CARDS.

OFFICIALS OF FIRMS CONTACTED SAID THEY WOULD CONSIDER BUYING US SOFTWARE--IF COMPATIBLE WITH PRESENT COMPUTERS-- IF THEY DECIDE TO GO FURTHER IN COMPUTERIZING PERSONNEL ADMINISTRATION. HOWEVER, AT PRESENT NONE PLAN GREATER PERSONNEL COMPUTERIZATION.

B. RESPONSES FROM TRADE ASSOCIATIONS: COMAFF CONTACTED A) ASSOCIATION NATIONALE DES DIRECTEURS ET CHEFS DU PERSONNEL AND B) SYNTEC INFORMATIQUE (LATTER IS TRADE ASSOCIATION FOR COMPUTER SOFTWARE). NEITHER GROUP HAD STATISTICS ON PRESENT EXTENT--NOR STUDIES ON FUTURE TRENDS--COMPUTERIZATION OF PERSONNEL MATTERS. BOTH ORGANIZATIONS REFERRED COMAFF TO GOVERNMENT MINISTRIES.

NOTE BY OC/T: # REFTEL UNIDENTIFIED.

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C. RESPONSE FROM GOVERNMENT: STAFF MEMBER CALLED ON OFFICIAL OF MISSION POUR L'INFORMATIQUE, MINISTERE DE L'INDUSTRIE. LATTER REPORTED GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT APPLICATION PRACTICE VARIES FROM MINISTRY TO MINISTRY. IN AT LEAST 90 OF EMPLOYING MINISTRIES, THE APPLICATION FORM IS NOT COMPUTERIZED. LEAVE AND SALARY ASPECTS OF AN EMPLOYEE'S WORK RECORD, HOWEVER, ARE ON COMPUTERS. OFFICIAL OF COMMISSION SOCIALE OF CONSEIL NATIONAL DU PATRONAT FRANCAIS, RELATIONS EXTERIEURES, PREDICTED THAT SOFTWARE EQUIPMENT TO ENABLE DEVELOPMENT OF FULLY COMPUTERIZED PERSONNEL SYSTEMS, INCLUDING APPLICATION AND ADMINISTRATION OF PERSONNEL, WILL BE IN DEMAND WITHIN THREE TO FIVE YEARS.

D. US COMPUTER FIRMS: ORDINARILY, CONTACTS IN THESE FIRMS ARE SIGNIFICANT SOURCE INFORMATION. DESPITE COMAFF'S EFFORTS PHRASE QUESTION DELICATELY, AMERICAN FIRMS CONTACTED WERE NOT FORTHCOMING, APPARENTLY REALIZING THAT ANY INFORMATION THEY GAVE OUT MIGHT BENEFIT POTENTIAL COMPETITOR.

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E. COMMERCIAL AGENTS: THOSE AGENTS CONTACTED FEEL THERE WILL BE A GROWING DEMAND FOR SOFTWARE FOR PERSONNEL SYSTEMS.

2. QUESTION B: ARE THERE NATIONAL LAWS AND/OR CUSTOMS EITHER IN EXISTENCE OR CONTEMPLATED THAT WOULD MAKE DESCRIBING EMPLOYEES TO COMPUTERS DESIRABLE?
NO.

3. QUESTION C: WHAT OTHER FACTORS, SUCH AS SCARCITY OF PROGRAMMERS, LEGAL RESTRICTIONS, MANAGEMENT POLICIES WOULD INFLUENCE PURCHASE FROM A US FIRM?

--NO SCARCITY OF PROGRAMMERS
--BUY FRENCH POLICY MIGHT INFLUENCE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO PURCHASE FRENCH SOFTWARE. DESIRE ON PART OF FRENCH GOVERNMENT TO DEVELOP FRENCH COMPUTER INDUSTRY COULD CONCEIVABLY, LEAD TO DIFFICULTIES IN OBTAINING PERMISSION TO ENTER THE MARKET.
--CREDIT POLICIES OF FRENCH BANKS, MANY OF WHICH ARE GOVERNMENT ENTERPRISES COULD RESTRICT EXTENSION OF CREDIT TO PRIVATE FRENCH COMPANIES FOR IMPORT OF US EQUIPMENT.
--FRENCH LAW PROHIBITS COMPUTERIZING CERTAIN TYPES OF PERSONAL INFORMATION, E.Q. UNION MEMBERSHIP, POLITICAL AFFILIATION, RELIGION. INFORMATION ENTERED IN THE COMPUTER MUST BE AVAILABLE TO THE INDIVIDUAL CONCERNED. IF ONE REFUSES PERMISSION TO COMPUTERIZE INFORMATION, NO INFORMATION ON THAT INDIVIDUAL CAN BE ENTERED. (THIS LEGISLATION PERTAINS EQUALLY TO FRENCH EQUIPMENT AS WELL AS TO EQUIPMENT OF ANY OTHER ORIGIN).
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--ORIGIN OF COMPUTER HARDWARE ALREADY IN PLACE, I.E. IF AMERICAN MADE AND OPERATING SATISFACTORILY, COMPANY WOULD PRESUMABLY BE FAVORABLE TO BUYING AMERICAN MADE SOFTWARE.

4. QUESTION D: WHAT IS GENERAL STATUS OF PERSONNEL

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MANAGEMENT RELATIVE TO OTHER EXECUTIVE PRIORITIES?

OUR RESEARCH LEADS US TO CONCLUDE THAT IMPORTANCE OF
PERSONNEL IN SCALE OF PRIORITIES VARIES FROM FIRM TO
FIRM. MORE PROGRESSIVE, LIBERAL, AND/OR PARTLY
GOVERNMENT-OWNED FIRMS MORE LIKELY TO EMPHASIZE
PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT AND PURSUE "ENLIGHTENED" PERSONNEL
POLICIES. SIZE OF FIRM, PROFITABILITY, ETC., ALSO ARE
FACTORS.

5. COMMENTS -

DURING COURSE OF EXTENSIVE RESEARCH COMAFF OBTAINED
EXTRACT OF FRENCH NATIONAL LAW NO. 78-17, JANUARY 6,
1978, TITLED "INFORMATIQUE FICHIERS ET LIBERTES",
REFERRED TO ABOVE UNDER QUESTION "C". COPY OF EXTRACT
IS BEING FORWARDED BY SEPARATE MAIL.

COMAFF ALSO OBTAINED COPY OF THE RAPPORT NORA MINC
ISSUED MAY 19, 1978. (SEE ARTICLE IN L'EXPRESS DATED
MAY 22-28, 1978). REPORT, PREPARED FOR PRESIDENT
GISCARD D'ESTAING BY TWO HIGH RANKING GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL
HAS RECEIVED ENORMOUS ATTENTION IN THE PRESS. IN
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ESSENCE, IT IS A PROPOSAL FOR GREATER USE OF COMPUTERS

IN FRENCH SOCIETY: CITING, INTER ALIA, THE UTILITY
OF DATA BANKS IN MEDICAL, EDUCATIONAL AND GOVERNMENTAL
FIELDS. COPY OF REPORT WILL BE FORWARDED IF REQUIRED.

6. POST SPENT BETWEEN THREE AND FOUR DAYS TO PREPARE
THIS RESPONSE.

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Reason:
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